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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADANA 0470

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SUBJECT: KURDS, AND PKK, CONTINUE TO SPREAD WEST

REF: ADANA 0468

11. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT

12. RECENT REPORTING FROM ADANA AND OTHER POSTS IN TURKEY HAS FOCUSED ON THE MASS MIGRATION OF KURDS FROM THE SOUTHEAST INTO THE LARGE CITIES OF THE WEST. AN ITEM IN THURSDAY'S ADANA PRESS SUMMARY SHOWS HOW KURDISH MIGRATION IS ALSO PUTTING THE SQUEEZE ON TURKISH RESIDENTS IN SMALLER TOWNS BORDERING ON THE TRADITIONAL KURDISH AREAS -- AND BRINGING WITH IT THE PKK.

13. ACCORDING TO A "MILLIYET" ITEM ON SEPTEMBER 9 (PARA 5, REFTEL), PKK MILITANTS ATTACKED THE SUMERBANK (A GOVERNMENT-OWNED COOPERATIVE) YARN MILL IN THE TOWN OF PERTEK ON THE NIGHT OF SEPT 6, KILLING THE MILL'S PLANNING CHIEF AND A SECURITY GUARD. THE MILITANTS THEN TORCHED THE MILL. SECURITY TROOPS REPORTEDLY ARRIVED AS THE MILITANTS WERE LEAVING, AND KILLED ONE. THE REST PRESUMABLY ESCAPED. PERTEK, A TOWN IN TUNCELI PROVINCE ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN TUNCELI AND ELAZIG ON THE NORTH SHORE OF THE KEBAN RESERVOIR, HAS BEEN ALMOST WHOLLY POPULATED BY ETHNIC TURKS SINCE THE ARMENIAN RESIDENTS WERE REMOVED OR EXTERMINATED DURING WORLD WAR I. THE MOTHER OF ONE OF CONSULATE ADANA'S EMPLOYEES HAILS FROM PERTEK, AND THE EMPLOYEE KNOWS THE TOWN, AND WAS A DISTANT RELATIVE OF ONE OF THE MEN KILLED IN THE YARN MILL ATTACK.

14. ACCORDING TO THE EMPLOYEE'S RELATIVES, THERE HAD BEEN NO SIGNS OF KURDISH UPRISING VIOLENCE IN THE TOWN UNTIL THIS SUMMER, AND THE ATTACK ON THE MILL WAS THE FIRST ATTACK EVER INSIDE THE TOWN. THE ONLY OTHER PREVIOUS INCIDENT, ALSO THIS SUMMER, INVOLVED GUNMEN -- PRESUMABLY KURDISH MILITANTS -- FIRING DOWN ON A NEARBY JANDARMA STATION FROM SURROUNDING HILLS. THE ATTACK ON THE MILL, HOWEVER, WAS DIRECTED AGAINST A GOVERNMENT-OWNED FACTORY, AND INCIDENTALLY, THE ONLY MAJOR EMPLOYER IN TOWN.

15. FROM THE TIME OF THE ARMENIAN REMOVALS UNTIL THE LAST 4 OR SO YEARS, PERTEK HAD REMAINED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TURKISH. IN THE LAST 4 YEARS, LARGE NUMBERS OF ZAZA KURDS FROM TUNCELI HAVE MOVED INTO THE TOWN, BOUGHT PROPERTY AND BUILT HOUSES, ALL APPARENTLY HOPING TO ESCAPE THE VIOLENCE IN AND AROUND TUNCELI. THE NUMBERS OF KURDS AND TURKS IN PERTEK ARE NOW ABOUT EQUAL, OR PERHAPS EVEN WEIGHTED SLIGHTLY IN FAVOR OF THE KURDS. THE TWO GROUPS DO NOT MIX, AND KEEP THEIR DISTANCE FROM EACH OTHER. KURDISH MEN DO NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, GO TO TURKISH TEA HOUSES, AND VICE VERSA.

16. EVEN BEFORE THE PKK FOLLOWED THE KURDISH MIGRANTS, MANY ETHNIC TURKS HAD ALREADY LEFT PERTEK, CITING THE OTHER PROBLEMS THE KURDISH MIGRANTS BROUGHT WITH THEM. HOWEVER, OUR EMPLOYEE'S RELATIVES HAVE RESISTED, HAVING THEIR ROOTS AND BUSINESSES IN TOWN. IT WILL BEAR WATCHING WHETHER THIS ATTACK, AND THE RESULTING JOBLESSNESS, WILL ACCELERATE THE TURKISH FLIGHT FROM SMALL TOWNS LIKE PERTEK.

17. COMMENT: IN THE PAST MONTH OR SO, THE TURKISH

PRESS HAS REPORTED GREAT GOVERNMENT SUCCESS IN THE SOUTHEAST, CITING FIGURES OF OVER 1000 PKK FATALITIES. THESE REPORTS ARE PRESUMABLY BASED ON TGS PRESS RELEASES, WHICH PROBABLY HAVE MORE PROPAGANDA THAN NEWS VALUE. BUT WHILE THE TGS IS CLAIMING VICTORY IN THE AREAS AROUND HAKKARI, SIRNAK, AND DOGUBEYAZIT, THE PKK CONTINUES TO STRIKE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE SOUTHEAST. AS THIS AND OTHER ATTACKS SHOW, THE MILITANTS CAN EVEN VENTURE INTO NEW AREAS.

18. FURTHER COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE PRESS REPORTS REFERRED TO THE ATTACKERS AS PKK MILITANTS, AND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY, TUNCELI PROVINCE HAS BEEN A BASE FOR THE TURKISH WORKERS AND PEASANTS LIBERATION ARMY (TIKKO). IT IS POSSIBLE THAT TIKKO ELEMENTS CARRIED OUT THE ATTACK, BUT THE LARGER AND MORE NOTORIOUS PKK GOT THE CREDIT. END COMMENTS.

WARREN